

*Application Serial No. 09/888,897
Amendment dated October 6, 2004
Reply to Official Action of July 6, 2004*

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the subject application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Previously presented) A stud bridging/spacing system adaptable to engage one or more studs, comprising:
a bridging member having a longitudinal axis;
a bracket attachable to the bridging member at any of a plurality of locations; and
at least one notch formed in said bracket such that when said bracket is attached to said bridging member, at least one said notch extends at an incline to the elongated axis of said bridging member and is configured to receive a portion of a stud therein.

Claims 2 and 3 (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The stud bridging/spacing member system of claim 1, wherein said notches extend inwardly at an angle of about five and a half degrees to about eight degrees relative to an axis that is perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said bridging member.

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5. (Currently amended) The stud bridging/spacing member system of claim 4, wherein said notches extend inwardly at an angle of about seven degrees.

6. (Currently amended) The stud bridging/spacing member system of claim 1, wherein the notches incline in the same direction.

7. (Currently amended) The stud bridging/spacing member system of claim 1, wherein the notches have a width of about 0.065 inch (0.16 cm) to 0.080 inch (0.20 cm).

8. (Currently amended) The stud bridging/spacing member system of claim 1, wherein the notches have a width of 0.080 inch (0.20 cm).

9. (Currently amended) The stud bridging/spacing member system of claim 1, wherein the sides of the notches are parallel.

10. (Currently amended) The stud bridging/spacing member system of claim 1, wherein the sides of the notches are straight.

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11. (Currently amended) The stud bridging/spacing member system of claim 1, wherein the bridging member is formed in a thickness selected from the group of fourteen, sixteen or eighteen gauge metal.
12. (Original) The stud bridging/spacing system of claim 1, wherein said bridging member has a V-shaped cross-section.
13. (Original) The stud bridging/spacing system of claim 12 wherein said bracket has a V-shaped cross-section.
14. (Currently amended) The stud/bridging spacing stud bridging/spacing system of claim 13 wherein said bracket has a first lateral side having at least one stud engaging notch therein and a second lateral side having other stud engaging notches therein that are laterally aligned with said stud engaging notches in said first lateral side.
15. (Previously presented) The stud bridging/spacing system of claim 14 wherein each said stud-engaging notch in said first lateral side and each said other stud engaging notch in said second lateral side extends at an incline to the longitudinal axis of said bridging member.

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16. (Original) The stud bridging/spacing system of claim 1 wherein said bracket is attached to said bridging member by removable fasteners.

17. (Original) The stud bridging/spacing system of claim 16 wherein said removable fasteners comprise sheet metal screws.

18. (Original) The stud bridging/spacing system of claim 1 wherein said bridging member has two ends and wherein said stud bridging/spacing system further comprises at least one hole through said bridging member adjacent each end thereof.

19. (Original) The stud bridging/spacing system of claim 1 further comprising a series of holes through said bridging member for attaching said bracket to said bridging member in a plurality of locations.

20. (Original) The stud bridging/spacing system of claim 19 wherein said holes are spaced from each other a distance that corresponds to another distance by which the studs are separated from each other.

21. (Previously presented) A stud bridging/spacing system for laterally supporting a plurality of spaced-apart studs each having a web, comprising:

means for spanning between the webs of at least two spaced-apart studs, said means for spanning having a substantially V-shaped cross-sectional shape; and
means for engaging the webs of the at least two spaced-apart studs, said means for engaging having a substantially V-shaped cross-sectional shape and being removably affixable to said means for spanning in a plurality of locations therealong.

22. (Previously presented) Apparatus for laterally supporting a plurality of spaced-apart studs each having a web, said apparatus comprising:
an elongated bridging member having two ends;
a stud engager formed in said elongated bridging member; and
a face bracket attachable to a vertical surface and attachable to one end of said elongated bridging member, said face bracket having a pair of first portions which are angled to approximate said cross-sectional shape of said elongated bridging member and a pair of second portions which extend at right angles to said pair of first portions and are attached thereto.
23. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the vertical surface is a web of a stud.
24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the vertical surface is a vertical wall.

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Claims 25 and 26 (Canceled)

27. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said elongated bridging member has a cross-sectional V-shape.
28. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22 wherein each said at least one stud engager comprises a notch in said elongated bridging member.
29. (Original) The apparatus of claim 28 wherein said elongated bridging member has an elongated axis and wherein each said notch extends at an incline to the longitudinal axis of said bridging member.
30. (Original) The apparatus of claim 29, wherein said notches extend inwardly at an angle of about five and a half degrees to about eight degrees relative to a perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.
31. (Original) The apparatus of claim 30, wherein said notches extend inwardly at an angle of about seven degrees.

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32. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said stud engagers are formed in a bracket removably attachable to said elongated bridging member.

33. (Previously presented) A metal stud wall comprising:
at least two metal studs each having at least two flanges interconnected by a web, the web of each stud having an opening and the studs being arranged in a row with the openings in the webs thereof aligned with one another;
an elongate member spanning between the webs of at least two studs, said elongate member having a substantially V-shaped cross-sectional shape;
a first bracket having a substantially V-shaped cross-sectional shape and being attached to said elongated member;
at least one stud engager in said first bracket for engaging the web of one metal stud;
a second bracket having a substantially V-shaped cross-sectional shape and being attached to said elongated member; and
at least one other stud engager in said second bracket for engaging the web of another stud.

34. (Original) A wall arrangement comprising:
a first wall having a vertical surface;

a second wall perpendicularly extending from said first wall, said second wall formed from a plurality of spaced-apart metal studs each having a web portion; an elongated bridging member that extends from said vertical surface through an opening in the web of one said metal stud; a stud engager on said elongated bridging member to engage said web of said one metal stud; and a face bracket attached to said vertical surface of said first wall and said elongated bridging member.

35. (Original) The wall arrangement of claim 34 wherein said stud engager comprises at least one notch formed in said elongated bridging member.

36. (Original) The wall arrangement of claim 34 wherein said stud engager comprises:
a bracket attached to said elongated bridging member; and
at least one notch formed in said bracket.

37. (Previously presented) A wall arrangement comprising:
first vertical surface means;

second wall means perpendicularly extending from said first vertical surface means, said second wall means formed from a plurality of spaced-apart metal studs each having a web portion;

means for spanning from said vertical surface through an opening in the web of one said metal stud;

means for retainingly engaging said web of said one metal stud, said means for retainingly engaging said web of said one metal stud on said means for spanning; and

means for attaching an end of said means for spanning to said vertical surface means.

Claims 38-41 (Canceled)

42. (Original) A method of constructing a wall, comprising:
supporting a plurality of metal studs each having a web with an opening therethrough, such that the openings in the metal studs are aligned with each other;
inserting a bridging member through the openings in at least two studs; and
attaching a bracket having a stud engager therein to the bridging member such that the stud engager is aligned with one of the webs of the studs; and
engaging the stud engager with the aligned web.

43. (Original) The method of claim 42 further comprising:
attaching another bracket having another stud engager therein to the bridging member
such that the another stud engager is aligned with another web of another stud; and
engaging the another stud engager with the another web.

44. (Canceled)

45. (Previously presented) A stud bridging/spacing system adaptable to engage one or more studs, comprising:
a bridging member having a longitudinal axis;
a bracket attachable to the bridging member at any of a plurality of locations; and
at least one notch formed in said bracket such that when said bracket is attached to said bridging member, at least one said notch extends at an incline to the elongated axis of said bridging member and at an angle of about five and a half degrees to about eight degrees relative to an axis that is perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said bridging member.

46. (Previously presented) A stud bridging/spacing system adaptable to engage one or more studs, comprising:
a bridging member having a longitudinal axis;
a bracket attachable to the bridging member at any of a plurality of locations; and

at least one notch formed in said bracket such that when said bracket is attached to said bridging member, at least one said notch extends at an incline to the elongated axis of said bridging member and at an angle of about seven degrees relative to an axis that is perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said bridging member.

47. (Previously presented) A stud bridging/spacing system adaptable to engage one or more studs, comprising:

a bridging member having a longitudinal axis;
a bracket attachable to the bridging member at any of a plurality of locations; and
at least one notch formed in said bracket such that when said bracket is attached to said bridging member, at least one said notch extends at an incline to the elongated axis of said bridging member and wherein at least one said notch has parallel sides.

48. (Previously presented) A stud bridging/spacing system adaptable to engage one or more studs, comprising:

a bridging member having a longitudinal axis;
a bracket attachable to the bridging member at any of a plurality of locations; and
at least one notch formed in said bracket such that when said bracket is attached to said bridging member, at least one said notch extends at an incline to the elongated axis of said bridging member and wherein the sides of at least one notch are straight.

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49. (Previously presented) A stud bridging/spacing system adaptable to engage one or more studs, comprising:
- a bridging member having a longitudinal axis;
 - a bracket attachable to the bridging member at any of a plurality of locations, said bracket having a first planar portion and a second planar portion that is not co-planar with said first planar portion; and
 - at least three longitudinally spaced apart notches in at least one of said first and second planar portions of said bracket, wherein at least one of said at least three notches opens to an outer edge of at least one of said first and second planar portions at a location that is longitudinally offset from a portion of the notch that is distant from said outer edge.